

Lougheed's Lasting Legacy

By Jonah

I trembled as I trudged into the sky-high library to scour the internet to research Calgary's bid for the 2026 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. Suddenly, I sensed a draft over my shoulder as if someone was breathing heavily down my neck. From nowhere, a booming voice mumbled, "I think we should because it was successful in 1988. It brought a huge crowd of people from all over the world." I whipped around and stared straight into Mayor Nenshi's glowing black, marbled eyes. Shocked, I nearly fell off my chair. I shuddered and asked him how I should begin my research, especially if I wanted to learn about the 1988 bid. He enthusiastically suggested that I read about the people who were involved with the 1988 bid.

My fingers flew across the keyboard as if it was on fire and googled for people who helped organize the bid for the 1988 Olympics. It threw me Frank King (chief executive of the Winter Games), Ralph Klein (former Mayor of Calgary 1980 - 1989) and Peter Lougheed. As I relentlessly pursued my research, I wasn't aware that Mayor Nenshi had plopped down beside me as if he had landed on a bed of feathers. I watched his beady, dark eyes, race rapidly across the blinding screen reading the news. His ears quivered as he felt my exasperated expression and took pity on me. Mayor Nenshi grabbed pieces of paper and scribbled the names from my screen. He then dropped the scraps into a hat and motioned for me to draw a name. My hand shook uncontrollably, my fingers began to perspire as I reached into the hat and pulled out a crumpled piece of paper.

As the drum rolled in my head, I slowly smoothed out the paper and it said, 'Peter Lougheed (1928 - 2012).' I thought to myself, Peter Lougheed died six years ago! How am I going to be able to talk to him to get information about the 1988 bid? I scratched my head and glanced to the right. The computer next to me was empty, as if no one had been sitting beside me, and yet I still had a scrap piece of paper in my hand with the name "Peter Lougheed". Was Mayor Nenshi really sitting beside me and helped me choose? Or was it a hologram?

I typed frantically to unearth information about Peter Lougheed. I couldn't believe that he was born and raised in Calgary, went to public school and completed a BA and BA Law degree at the University of Alberta. The most amazing part was that he completed an MBA from Harvard University, a private university in Cambridge, Massachusetts. I discovered that he was a politician in Alberta from 1965 as the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, then an MLA in 1967 for Calgary-West to be the leader of the Official Opposition party, and finally became the Premier of Alberta from 1971 - 1985. His huge contributions made Alberta a wealthy province by developing its resources such as natural gas and fossil fuels. Premier Lougheed ensured that profits from the resources were used to create the Heritage Savings Trust Fund to help people in the future, and he developed the Alberta Heritage Foundation to provide money for future Medical Research projects. As a leader, Premier Lougheed looked after Albertans, such as improving public services, health care and education, as well as be part of future decisions made at the federal level of government in Ottawa.

I wonder what Peter Lougheed did after he retired from public office? How did he help Calgary win the bid for the 1988 Olympics? I am also interested in bringing events to Calgary to help make my home famous and share our many cultures. I finally dragged my eyes to the window, only to notice that the sky was black as night and the fog was as thick as smoke. I scrounged for my phone, and called my mom to come pick me up from the library.

Lounging on the bench outside, a raspy voice uttered, “I heard that you’re looking for me.” Sitting still as a statue, gasped softly, as my jaw hung low and wide, staring into the abyss. “What can I do for you?” I craned my neck for a view from my peripheral vision. It’s Peter Lougheed! I told him I was researching about the 2026 Olympics. I pounced on the opportunity and blitzed him with my burning question about the role he played in securing Calgary’s bid in 1988. Peter shared that after he retired from public office, he returned to his law practice and helped companies become successful in business. Peter used the relationships he had with other businessmen such as Ron Southern, and his connections in sports to influence the IOC. A warm feeling travelled up my spine, I concluded that it didn’t hurt to try to bid. “Honk, honk!” My mom roared up to me. I turned around, all that was left was a snow-covered spot. Was I really talking to Peter Lougheed? Or a figment of my imagination?

Peter Lougheed inspires me because he improved education for everyone. He helped make it possible for students to learn in different languages, such as Chinese and English at the same time. As Premier of Alberta, Peter Lougheed has helped me become comfortable in taking on small leadership roles at my school, such as being part of the recycling group, supervision duties during recess, and assisting our facility operator in putting chairs away after an assembly. I now understand that free Health Care, short wait times at the Children’s and regular hospital Emergency rooms are a result of Peter Lougheed’s priority concern for our health and well-being. I am a recipient of his legacy! When I was three years old, I had an accident and I needed stitches on my forehead. My parents took me to the Emergency at the Calgary Children’s Hospital. The doctors and nurses triaged me immediately and rushed me into a room to give me stitches. From this experience, I hope to become more involved with my community and learn how volunteer opportunities help me become a positive contributor in society.

References

<http://www.calgaryherald.com/news/alberta/peter-lougheed-legacy/index.html>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Lougheed

http://www.glenbow.org/mavericks/english/oil/peter_lougheed.html

<http://albertachampions.org/Champions/honourable-e-peter-lougheed-1928-2012/>

<https://www.harvard.edu/>

<http://www.assembly.ab.ca/lao/library/PREMIERS/p-lougheed.html>

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/peter+lougheed+premier+people/898515/story.html>

<https://olympic.ca/2010/04/21/2010-hall-of-fame-inductee-peter-lougheed/>